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Every human being is always open to some degree; for example, open for learning, experience, change, improvement, or further degradation by his own standards or those of others. Every experience alters an individual's learning capacity. Therefore, to say a child is naturally of high or low intelligence with unlimited or limited learning power is unjust. Educators must explore interventions that make more effective differences in the creation of new capacities than do the traditional interventions that characterize our educational system. Our emphasis on competitive grades precludes the possibility of multifaceted children with many dimensions of skills. Measuring success or failure on the basis of cognitive skill alone is widespread in our system, which values and rewards that skill. An alternative is the motivation of individuals. Motivation involves getting the child to perceive goals, giving him a sense of possibly achieving them, providing resources he will need for achievement, and eliciting his willingness to pay for gains that will accrue to him. Our schools must be diverse. We need ranges of experience; variability of methods and content; and tempo, place, and program to accommodate the diversity in children. (DO)

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Albany, New York

EARLY EDUCATION: THE CREATION OF CAPACITY

By

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at

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Early Education: The Creation of Capacity

Kenneth Burke, poet critic and philosopher, long ago pointed out that our attitudes toward history are so fixed and rigid -- and he meant to include our attitudes toward life and man, and the basic assumptions on which we operate -- they are so fixed and rigid that it is almost impossible for new evidence to penetrate the cerebral curtain. As a result, we often go through life seeing only that which conforms to what we want to believe or have early learned to believe, and we are rendered incapable of recognizing important contradictory evidence when encountered.

Burke prescribed, as a result, that we should reverse traditional metaphors -- he thought through language we could do it -- for the possible shock value of such reversal. So, for instance, instead of saying that "a little learning is a dangerous thing," we might let ourselves and others think about the possible effects of a little versus a lot of learning, by declaring at the outset that, "a little learning is a blessed and creative thing." You can make a parlor game out of this, of course. Think of such formulae as, "Only a rolling stone gathers moss," or, "The worst things in life are free," or, more seriously, "Where there's a way there's a will," and "Happiness is all right, but can you buy money with it?"

Now, I did not entitle my talk, "The Creation of Capacity" for its shock value, although, perhaps, a little thought about the concept of man's creation of capacity may help us to start thinking about problems of childhood education in ways which are somewhat different than if we started with other and more traditional notions of capacity.

I can clarify the meaning of the title by urging that every child and every adult is capable at every moment in his life of becoming something more profound, more extensive, more personally self-estimable and more socially desirable, (and, also, of course, something more socially undesirable) than what he is at any moment that one finds him. Every child and every adult at every moment of their lives.

Now, that formulation doesn't yet bring us to the notion of the continuous creation of capacity, which is a notion I want to fix on. But it begins to suggest that every human being is always open to some degree: open for learning, experience, change, improvement, or for further degradation, by his own and others' standards. If our ordinary methods of locating, understanding and using the nature of the openness in the individual seem ineffective, the answer is not to be found in the locked-up character of the individual. That is, he is not to be scapegoated for being resistant to our efforts. Rather, we, as educators, are obligated to ask what new keys might be fashioned that would unlock what now appear to be permanently locked and sealed doors.

The notion that you can't teach an old dog new tricks may be right, although I doubt it. Anyway, those are dogs. They are not human beings. Besides, I doubt this is right. What is probably right, instead, is that it hardly seems worthwhile to most people to try to teach an old dog new

tricks. But if you really cared and you took the time and the effort, you probably could teach an old dog a whole repertoire of new tricks. In general, all of us are always undergoing change. You can not swim in the same river but once!

So, too, while socialization is normally thought of as referring to young children who are being prepared for life in the adult world, we have come now to recognize the great significance of what is called adult socialization at all ages in adult life, and much of this is re-socialization, re-training, teaching old dogs new tricks, in effect.

I don't know about the rest of you, but I, for one, feel I have undergone during the last year a very substantial set of changes in my attitudes about freedom and experimentation for young people. They used to be called adolescents. I have seriously revised my notions as to what is proper and fitting, at what ages and with whom and for what reasons. Part of this change has involved my finally putting my money where my mouth is or, more politely, bringing my actions more into conformity with my professed ideology. Part of the change has involved a shift in ideology and morals.

Some may want to call my change the process of my corruption and my degradation. By their standards, they will see me as having yielded to certain demands of youth that they would consider immoral. But however the change is evaluated, the fact of change is, by my introspective evidence and by the evidence of surprise on my children's faces, the fact of change is undeniable.

I suspect many of you have had the same experience in the past year or two. It doesn't matter whether you think it is good or bad. What is crucial is the fact of the very possibility of change, and what follows is that, as a result of my re-socialization, I am in many ways a different person, different not in my basic personality structure, whatever that may be, but different in my readiness and preparedness for things. Different, too, for our purposes this morning, in my capacity to become things and to learn things and to hear and see things among the youth that I could not have become before and could not have seen or learned before.

I have, in effect, changed my capacity to learn, to feel, to sympathize, to taste, to savor, and to be repulsed and offended. These are all important capacities so far as I am concerned, and I value them, although I see some real danger in those changes. The point is that not only have I learned something new, but in the process, I have become capable of becoming and being something new and different, and by these standards, something more valuable for what I want out of life.

This is what I mean by the creation of capacity. The idea means simply that one's capacity for being and becoming and learning is itself always undergoing modification or, at least, always subject to such modification. It is not simply that you have learned new things, but that in learning you then become differently capable than you were before. Capacity in that sense is always in the process of being created. And I do mean <u>natural</u> capacity. For man's nature is social and cultural in the

final sense, and whatever happens to him in his natural environment of social and cultural life, that is, in the matrix of other social beings with whom he must interact, that is a natural part of him, as natural and basic as anything in his genes or blood.

Now, I recognize that this view is considerably at variance with the older idea that we are born with certain genetically endowed and fixed capacities on which environment then plays a variety of tunes which has certain determinable fixed outcomes, but that as this view implies, we are never more capable than what our genes make possible. It is fundamentally erroneous and dangerous, I believe, to think in this way. All the observable facts of life testify to the contrary. Yet, some geneticists are now claiming that if they get to know all the components of the genes, if they get to know physiological and neurological components, if they are able to decode the genetic code, they will then be able to predict all possibilities of human behavior. That is nonsense, because most of whatever man becomes or worries about not becoming, or having or being, has nothing to do with genetics.

Take the matters of grace, salvation, honor, shame. What is the conceivable relevance of genes to these human concerns and possibilities? Or, take love. Is romantic love exhaustible by any conceivable genetic specifications? Hardly. Is the capacity for love genetic? Part of that capacity may be, insofar as you have a human being with blood and bones and hormones and glands. But the meaningful organizational patterns and the sensible content of love and hate -- these matters are cultural. They are <u>super</u>-organic. They are learned on a non-genetic level. They cannot be read in the genes even if you have perfect knowledge of the genes. They cannot be inferred from the genes. They cannot be reduced to them nor explained by them.

Can you alter a person's capacity for love by chemical interference and physiological interference even if that capacity is really super-organic? Yes. Surely, for example, you can alter a person's capacity for experiencing delight in music (which is a cultural, <u>learned</u>, super-organic capacity). You can alter that capacity by puncturing his eardrum so he can't hear any music, and then he won't be able to experience any pleasure in hearing music, or, for the final solution, you can kill him. Will he then be able to feel anything from the music? Not at all. Yet, he will have exactly the same genes as he had before.

We have here, then, the familiar distinction between what are known as <u>necessary</u> conditions for any state of being and <u>sufficient</u> conditions for any state of being. The body and all of its components are <u>necessary</u> for the survival and, hence, the functioning of the organism. But that body and all its genes are not <u>sufficient</u> conditions for feeling, thinking, or being. Those sufficient conditions are created and given form and content by the culture and the life history of the individual.

Now, I stress this non-sufficiency of biological explanations of capacity in order to subvert, as it must be subverted, the idea of measuring native capacity. We have long labored, presumably intelligently, around the problem of that measurement, and we feel ourselves very advanced

and modern if we denounce our I.Q. tests on the grounds that they are not culture-free, and don't in fact measure native capacity as a result. But one can now see that even this stand is fallacious and misleading, because it implies that there is a fixed native capacity that can, in principle, be measured, and this is what I am now raising seriously into question.

I want to be moderate about this and claim only what I think the evidence and the theory permits one responsibly to claim at this moment. That would be that we simply don't know anything about so-called native capacity, that we cannot even define it, so as to know where to look for it or how to measure it. Thus, any individual's capacity at any one moment in his life -- and let's confine it to learning capacity -- is always subject to alteration, in principle at least, depending upon the character and the effectiveness of the environmental intervention.

Moreover, we know that from birth on there is a continuing interaction between the body and its potential and the environment and its potential, so that the individual child or adult at any moment is a product of that interaction. More important still, that product at any given moment of life sets the base line for what the next moment's product can be, and makes it different than if the previous moment had not occurred. That is to say, you alter your capacity at every moment of experience by the fact of all your previous experiences.

In principle, for instance, all of you here are now capable of becoming and learning something more after hearing this, assuming you take it to heart, than you could have become before hearing this. Of course, it may be only a new capacity for an excess of outrage and condemnation. But there can be little question that you are now at this very moment becoming differently capable of different things than you were capable of five minutes ago.

I am not really saying anything more startling than is summed up in the pithy statement of surprise sometimes emitted by each person, "Good lord, I didn't know I had it in me!" What this discovery really implies is that a new capacity had been created by a fortunate conjunction of circumstances. It is not that it has always been there and just now discovered and uncovered, but, in effect, it has been created. To contend otherwise -- to suggest that it has always been there and that it only needed to be uncovered, is to engage in that marvelous but futile exercise in the proof of the existence of God, which argues that if God did not really exist, one couldn't even think of him or about him. The fallacy is discoverable immediately when you turn it around and say that if man didn't exist, God couldn't be thought of. Hence, God's existence is dependent upon man's.

Both of these statements may be good cocktail party talk, but they are not really serious, empirical approaches to the nature of man. I would submit that the idea that everything we manage to become was contained within us like some little homunculus, who expands with all his potentials finally coming out into the open, is not really a serious version of the human situation.

Unfortunately, it is taken seriously everywhere, and, as a result, we have all these efforts at constructing culture-free tests to get at native intelligence, and all of the so-called achievement tests, which really we mean to be ability tests, but which are neither in any real sense of the word. And we have all these metaphors we normally use in describing children in fixed categories of so-called abilities.

I want to urge on you that the so-called ceilings of children's abilities, which so many teachers and testing people feel they have discovered, are really not children's ceilings at all. Rather, they represent declarations by the effective agent of the system, be he the teacher or whoever, that within the time, the materials, the limited intelligence and wisdom of the teacher, the limited resources of the system, that's all the performance that the teacher can get out of this student on this or that task at this time. That is what we mean by a so-called ceiling of children's abilities.

Look at how much we can learn from that. We learn, first, as we look over all the factors, what is the range of variables or influences that contribute to the child's momentary capacity or incapacity. There is the teacher, her intelligence, her time, her resources, her concern, her willingness, her creativity. There is the system and its resources or lack of them, and what it values and honors, and how it makes the child feel and care. Then, there is the child, too, and whatever nature gave him and whatever nurture mixed up in him. There is out-of-school environment and its resources and limitations and obstacles. That is the range of factors that influence a child's ceilings.

If a child's capacity at any given moment is the product of the interaction of all these factors, then, on the one hand, you can be dismayed at what is required to move all those factors around. But, at the next moment, you can be buoyed up by the awareness of the numerous possible points of intervention that might make a difference in the child's so-called ceilings of ability. This is, surely, a different formulation than that which says this child is naturally or low or high intelligence and he simply can't learn any more or he can learn so much more than he can.

Many of you have heard of the Coleman Report on Equality of Educational Opportunity, and you have heard, too, that the report seems to say that almost nothing the schools are doing seems to make a difference in the intellectual outcomes; that the best prediction of the child's intellectual outcome, as measured by some simple cognitive tests, is the socio-economic situation of the child's home, and that the difference between children's cognitive achievements seems to vary more with the socio-economic background than with any differences in the schools themselves, such as qualities of teachers or availability of laboratories and libraries. That is what it is, the Coleman Report says.

Now, I don't want to go into the complexity of the findings, but I wish to point out what the report is in effect saying. It says that the interventions <u>thus far tried by the schools</u> are not effective enough for altering the differentials already brought into the school by the children. Moreover, there is the implication that the schools re-enforce the differ-

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entials which are brought in by the children rather than underrate the differentials in the direction of equality. But the report does not say anywhere anything at all about the children's native capacity or ceilings. It does not say that they have discovered that these ceilings could not be raised by the schools no matter what the schools did or tried.

In the first place, there is no possible way of talking in this report about the schools trying lots of things, because the amount of things about schools examined in the report is very small and limited. For instance, teachers' qualities are defined in part by the number of hours of graduate work beyond the B.A. degrees. In the second place, there is no assumption that we are dealing with native capacities. In the third place, there are some differences that are not trivial at all.

As one reviewer, Robert Crain, pointed out in this month's American Journal of Sociology, "The brightest and luckiest tenth of northern Negroes are in schools where their mean achievement is fully four grades ahead of the dullest and unluckiest tenth of Negroes. This implies that our best high schools are really junior colleges, and our worst high schools are merely junior high schools."

When Crain talks about the brightest tenth of Negro students, he is not referring to anything about natively bright students. He is referring to brightness as measured by school performance at the time of testing. There is every reason, I believe, to assume that this is understood as a product of the child, his life, environment, and the school experiences he has had, and not as a genetic or preordained capacity about which we know nothing, except that people vary.

So, too, many of you have heard or read very important parts of that very important book by Samuel Bloom on Stability and Change in Human Characteristics, and you have heard or read that Bloom argues that much of the total I.Q. that a child ever achieves is achieved by the age of 8, and somewhat more by 12, and very little is then left over to acquire between 12 and 18. There is nothing said about native intelligence but only about I.Q. scores. This says, in effect, that the situation for children in this culture and the structure of the curriculum in these schools is such that on those skills relevant to scoring on I.Q. tests, most of the major impact of these schools is had by the age of 12 and that the schools do little or add little to that measured score between 12 and 18. But there is no notion here of inherited, fixed capacities.

I mention these two books partly because they have been such influential, widely cited and widely misinterpreted pieces of research, which appear to, but in fact do not support the notion of fixed ceilings or capacities being measured and found substantially different under any and all environmental interventions. We have begun to explore the range of possible interventions that might make more effective difference in the creation of new capacities than the traditional interventions that characterizes most of our education efforts to date. Moreover, if you want to take the system for granted, Bloom's book warns urgently of the importance of early childhood education.

I want to call your attention to one other piece of research that illustrates what I mean by the falsity of the notion of ceilings and further illustrates another principle, namely, that whenever we find so-called ceilings of ability or capacity, we had better suspect that these have been ceilings created by the official adult agents who have made decisions about what a child can become and have proceeded forthwith to make sure this child becomes that preordained thing and no more and no less.

I report for you the experiments of a social psychologist at Harvard, Robert Rosenthal. He was concerned with what is known as experimental bias: translated, teacher bias. In short, the question was how much of the results of any test, exercise, examination, anything of the sort is a function of the preconceptions held by the teachers or the experimenter and how much of it is a function of the actual performances by the subjects or students themselves.

Without going into a lot of detail, let me just report that Rosenthal discovered that much of the difference in the scores of two sets of students on a series of tests they were put through were due to biassed scoring and reporting of results on the part of the experimenters who had put them through these tests. The crucial fact is that the experimenters had been previously told what levels of performance to expect from the students, and the tests came out in extraordinary conformity with these preconceived levels of ability. The group of students labeled "smart" came out smart, and those labeled "dumb" came out dumb -- and this in spite of the fact that Rosenthal made sure beforehand that the two groups of students were approximately the same on all possible counts relevant to performance on the tests. In short, the different outcomes of the two groups of students were due to the different expectations of the experimenters (read=teachers) and the biassed reporting they engaged in, under pressure of these preconceptions.

This experiment illustrates the principle of the self-confirming hypothesis, or the self-confirming bias, namely, the process by which men make real and actual that which they have assumed to be real at the start of their actions.

Think of the implications of this process for the discussions we have about the value of homogeneous grouping and tracking. Think of the fact, for instance, that there isn't a school system in the country that can claim that it alters the group or track to which a child is assigned at the seventh grade, that there is no alteration in even as many as ten percent of the cases by the twelfth grade. Not ten percent of the cases assigned are altered by the twelfth grade! And the assignments are made on the basis of I.Q. scores, achievement tests scores, and teachers' judgments.

Think of the near perfection of diagnosis that is implied in the non-shifting character of these assignments. Almost perfect prediction at the seventh grade level! Either the teachers are geniuses of diagnosis or the self-confirming hypothesis takes over and makes true what was assumed to be true.

I should like to think that the teachers were geniuses, but there is little empirical support for this wish of mine. The greater likelihood is that they simply make children into the image they set beforehand.

So, we not only create new levels of capacity, we also create levels of incapacity. We create actual ceilings on capacity by what we do with children. I am submitting, in short, that every child can become something more and something more valuable (or evil or undesirable, if you wish) than what he is at any given moment that you find him, if you wish to do so. And if he does not, it is because we have decided he cannot, or we do not care, and we take steps, either by omission or commission, to insure that he will not become something more.

The silliness of the tracks and the grades, too, is evidenced by the very nice finding by Donald Hoyt for the American College Testing Service that as a result of surveying 46 different researches into the bearing of college grades on success in later life, as measured in various professions and vocations, it was discovered there is almost no correlation between college grades and vocational success.

Now, since high school grades are supposed to be relevant for predicting college grades and grammar school grades are relevant for predicting high school grades, but college grades predict nothing except themselves , if nothing is predicted besides the grades themselves.

I have talked all this time on the level and quantity of capacity, and I want to shift for these last minutes to another dimension of capacity.

It is all too evident that we concentrate primarily in our school system -- in our honors and in our rewards that we give -- on a restricted range of so-called cognitive achievements. There are exceptions, to be sure. Some schools reward other things, and sometimes colleges admit on the basis of other qualities. However, high college board scores and standing in class measured by grades on so-called hard cognitive skills are the payoffs in our system.

I wouldn't mind the emphasis on competitive grades so much if I thought we were viewing our children as multi-faceted persons with many dimensions of possible skill and living and experience and pleasure, and, at bottom, capacity for these things, which we would value and reward. However, it is painfully evident that if we look at what our schools spend money on, and what they honor, and what is in the curriculum, what teachers boast of, what they measure success and failure by, almost nothing but restricted and restricting cognitive skills are really valued (except, of course, for the first three years when we say it doesn't really matter, because education hasn't really started yet. Then, we let children dibble-dabble in paints and music and in play, because that is, after all, inconsequential). Does this matter? Well, it does or doesn't, depending on what kind of people and what kind of society you want to have.

Moreover, it matters in another crucial way relevant to kinds of people, on the assumption that different children vary in the areas of

their growth possibilities, some having more of the natural equipment out of which capacity can be created in some areas more than in another; some, because of their psychic states and social backgrounds, needing to come at cognitive materials sideways instead of head-on, and needing above all, to get some sense of their own values; some being able to find pleasure in their lives out of certain kinds of self-consummatory instead of instrumental activities. Because of these variances and the differences in children, it seems ludicrous, unfair and destructive for the schools to have such a restricted model of what kind of child is honorable and desirable.

The openness of a child is often linked to a very devious and circuitous path, proceeding from a bit of exposure to an experience that may give him a momentary sense of success; then, from there, into a temporary blandishment and seduction to probe some cognitive skills; then back for reinforcement to the effectively reinforcing activity, and so on around this crazy route that we have to explore with him. Can anyone who has worked with nursery and kindergarten children believe otherwise?

There are those who out of the best of motives and concerns for the children are beginning to insist on the importance of a rigorous concentration, under very severe, and apparently punishing regimens and circumstances, on the training of the basic cognitive skills, so as to give the child mastery over these skills to a larger degree than before, so as to give him, in turn, a sense of competence and capacity to manage the cognitive demands of the school.

These issues are now very moot, as you people know better than I. This new movement toward harsh and demanding discipline as a condition of learning has its strong advocates and its strong enemies. Let me point out something here. Implicit in this notion of the requirement of strong discipline training in the cognitive skills is an acceptance of the system as is, an acceptance of the cognitive skills as <u>the</u> basic skills. The goal of the school as presently operative is, in short, taken for granted, and the methods and content of relations to students are then structured to meet these going assumptions.

It is also taken for granted that this form of pedagogy is successful. But that has not yet been demonstrated. More modestly, it is assumed that it had <u>better</u> be successful, because the so-called other form which involves so-called "coddling" is thought to be unsuccessful. But <u>this</u> is not known yet.

What results do we want? Even if you assume that cognitive performance is the sine qua non of academic success, if that is what you are after, we know that by the facts of nature and nurture we are going to have very significant differences in any population, deprived or otherwise, with regard to mastery of certain skills. Are we then supposed to throw away the half that scores below the median? And half of any population will always score, by definition, below the median. Shall we then reward those who always fall above the 50 percent line and always punish those who fall below?

What do we do with that half that don't "meet the standards?" Throw them away?

Wouldn't it be better, instead of moving faddishly from one unworkable system to one so highly debatable and divisive in the school community, if we asked first whether we have stated and agreed upon our goals? Do we know what we are doing to the psyches of kids at whom we shout and whom we structure in harshly disciplinary ways? Are there other values and developments in the children that may be crippled or distorted or maimed in the process? Are we so sure of the outcomes as to justify these kinds of interventions? Ought we not to look at some other possible shortcomings in the system as the sources of our difficulty, rather than simply the "coddle versus the shout" as alternative forms of pedagogy?

We are dealing here, fundamentally, with the problem of motivation. Motivation is not achieved by a boot in the tail. It is not a question of saying, "Make up your mind. Know it, and you will." Motivation is complex. It involves, first, somehow getting the person, the child, to perceive that the goals you want him to move toward are desirable. He has to have some sense of possibility that he can achieve them. He has to have some sense that the resources he will need to achieve them are available to him. He has to have some knowledge of the costs he is going to have to pay along the way and the willingness to pay the cost in view of the possible gains. That is called deferred gratification, and that is hard, especially for children, who have had no gratification in their lives. Why should they defer any more?

You also have to have some tentative trying out of the possible means to the goals; some modest experience of success; some models of previously successful people who encourage him by what they have as a result of achieving; some reinforcements of the goal through the model, and his own individual success; a growing sense of his own competence and the development of his own image of himself as an individual who can perform the tasks and make the achievements; some rewarding and reinforcing from others for the modest and tentative efforts; some evident concern and pleasure from the powerful adults in one's efforts; and then, slowly, painfully, motivation begins to accumulate as a result of all the interactions among these component processes.

Now, it may be that the amount of these steps necessary for one child will be different from those required for another child, but no child can bypass any of these steps. He has to go through them all even though some will short-circuit the process more rapidly than others, needing, for instance, much less reinforcement through concerned adults.

I repeat that all children, all adults, all societies, develop only by some version of all the steps in that process. When it is advocated that we be stern and harsh in the best interest of the child, we had better be sure his best interests are agreed upon, that the prices he pays for his success are prices worth paying, and that his views have been taken into account; that the payoff is worth it in terms of the costs paid; that there is a rooting and institutionalization of the gains so they are not simply Hawthorne-type ephemeralities.

Perhaps some children make it better one way than another. It seems to me a piece of pedagogical monstrosity to assume all children "make it" essentially the same way any more than all adults "make it" the same way. We have had that monstrosity in one way and one way only, for instance, in language education. Everyone now assumes that all children learn by hearing languages; so in the third to eighth grades, you don't let the child look at the language, but only hear it. Now we are beginning to learn that some kids are primarily visual, and can't learn languages without seeing things in front of them. If this variability is present in such a fundamental and basic skill, why, then, assume uniformity of the child population with regard to the possible effects of harsh, severe discipline?

We forget, don't we, that education and schools are for the children? Don't we do this in our enthusiasm for new pedagogical fads? That schools are for children? We mistake sometimes our sense of triumph, in professional circles, for the children's satisfying sense of success. They are by no means the same thing. We are differently valued and valuing creatures.

We have the obligation, don't we, by all tokens and criteria of democratic theory and policy, to be equally concerned with all children and all development regardless of how different these children may be. There is no justification in any aspect of our political doctrine or of our educational theory for preferring the development of some children to that of other children; no justification at all. Not in the schools. Maybe in the office, army, and factories, but not in the schools.

Our schools, therefore, must be diverse, and open enough, and broad-ranging enough, and varied enough in their methods and in their personalities to make room for the differences in the children. We will never make out, will we, if we shut down the doors on possible ranges of experience, and variability of methods and content, and tempo and place and program; we need all these things to accommodate the diversity in children.

This is not Utopian. These are the hard, practical considerations that you must attend to if you mean really to educate all children as best you can and to care equally about the education of all children. I repeat that the schools are for the children and their pleasure and their growth, their development and their becoming adults.

We return to the earliest of our themes, the Creation of Capacity. It is continuous. It is without end. It is diverse. It is variable from child to child and within any child variable from time to time and from topic to topic. It is variable by tempo, by consequence, by need of different kinds of supports. It is ever there to be created when and if we find out how to do it. And if we find it is not being created, then, it is in us and our system and our approach and our transaction with children, that we must look, for we have the power. It is in us that we must seek the cause of the temporary stymieing of the growth of the child.

For if we know one thing, it is that a sense of success and a feeling of one's capacity to become capable is indispensable to the achievement of the capacity. We cannot even begin to think of making such experiences

available to all children unless we care equally for all of them and are prepared with our diversity to meet their diversity. Nowhere is this as possible as at the early ages when the maximum of openness is in front of us, and when the openness seems more easily probed and explored than at any other time in life. It is criminal to waste these opportunities or to despoil them by the rigid insistence on unverified pedagogical preferences and on unverified assumptions regarding learning development.

If we fail at the early ages, we set the failure for all subsequent stages. Recovery and rescue gets increasingly difficult as age moves on. Let us then make it possible for capacity to be created at all times, with pleasure for all, by insuring its maximum base and cultivation at every stage of education.